

occupied by the invader. Three sanguinary campaigns had failed to release the cruel grip of the foe upon more than a few kilometres of French soil.

Every millimetre of the liberated earth *Sufferings* was rent deeply by the cruel claws of war of France and reddened by the blood of the

liberating troops. Hundreds of the towns and villages of France and thousands of kilometres of her richest fields were devastated. She was bleeding from every vein, still on her feet facing the foe, but staggering. Now there burst upon her a new hope of speedy deliverance. Had she been thwarted in her expectation at that time she might have sulked. As usual the politicians would have been blamed in both countries. To stand blame is primarily their function. The bureaucrats govern and the politicians share the praise, but monopolise the blame. Briand and his Ministers would certainly have disappeared.

Who would have come next ? Peradventure Clemenceau, but perhaps Caillaux ! Peace at this stage would not have been distinguishable from an acknowledgment of defeat, and could only have been concluded on that assumption.

The new hope had gathered such an impetus by the date of the first Allied Conference held in London at Christmas, that nothing could have arrested it but the flaming ramparts of the Chemin

des Dames. It had all the unreason and
extravagance
of a religious and patriotic revival. In
the absence

of M. Briand through illness.
M. Ribot

Ribot demands demanded with unwonted
peremptoriness

that the British Cabinet should there
and

then give their assent to the
Nivelle plan,
which involved the co-operation of the
British Army
in an attack on the German lines at a
point and by